

Message Text

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FOR USDEL TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

FOL MONTEVIDEO 0598 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO USIA WASHDC
ASUNSION BUENOS AIRES SANTIAGO FEB 22, 1978 REPEATED TO YOU
QUOTE

UNCLAS MONTEVIDEO 0598

USIA FOR IOP/M, ILA

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SUBJECT: FIRST EDITORIAL COMMENTARY ON TODMAN SPEECH

REF: MONTEVIDEO 0582

1. IN THE FIRST EDITORIAL COMMENTARY TO APPEAR TO DATE ON THE
TODMAN SPEECH PRO-GOVERNMENT EL DIARIO FEBRUARY 21 PUBLISHED
A LONG EDITORIAL ENTITLED, "TERENCE TODMAN: AN ENCOURAGING
SPEECH." FOLLOWING IS A TRANSLATION OF THE FULL TEXT:

2. (BEGIN TEXT) ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION IN THESE COLUMNS
WE HAVE COMMENTED ON THE POLICY OF "DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS"
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WHICH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN CARRYING OUT WITH SUCH
ENTHUSIASM SINCE THE INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT JAMES E. CARTER.
ON THESE OCCASIONS, WE WARNED OF THE CONSEQUENCES WHICH IN SPITE OF
THE GOOD INTENTIONS OF THE AMERICAN CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE APPLICA-
TION OF THAT POLICY COULD HAVE, ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, NOT BECAUSE
OF ITS OBJECTIVE --WHICH ALL THE FREE WORLD CANNOT HELP BUT SHARE--
BUT BECAUSE OF THE WAY IT WAS BEING PUT INTO PRACTICE.

3. WE POINTED OUT THAT THE RESULTS OBTAINED A FEW MONTHS AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THAT POLICY WERE TOTALLY NEGATIVE: ALL THAT HAD BEEN ACHIEVED WAS AN OPEN CONFRONTATION WITH TRADITIONALLY FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS THAT HAD BEEN PILLORIED ON RATHER SHAKY GROUNDS. AND WE EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT THIS WAS BASICALLY DUE TO TWO MISTAKES BY WASHINGTON. FIRST: THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD ONLY HEARD THE VOICE OF THE OPPOSITION, WITHOUT BROTHERING TO PAY ATTENTION TO THE REASONS WIELDED BY THE DIFFERENT GOVERNMENTS AND WITHOUT EVEN CONCERNING ITSELF ABOUT VERIFYING WHO THESE OPPOSITION VOICES WERE OR WHAT THEIR INTENTIONS WERE. SECOND: THAT COUNTRIES WERE MEASURED WITH DIFFERENT YARDSTICKS; WHILE SOME WITH A DEEP DEMOCRATIC TRADITION WERE PUBLICLY CENSURED FOR SUPPOSED DEVIATIONS, RAPPROCHEMENT WAS EXTENDED TO OTHER NATIONS, SUCH AS RED CHINA, WHICH ARE NOTED FOR THEIR LONGTIME VIOLATION OF THE MOST BASIC RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL. WE SAID THAT THERE WAS NO BETTER WAY TO PERVERT THE MORALITY OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY THAN TO CONTINUE PERSEVERING IN THESE MISTAKES. AND WE W# WARNED THAT THEY WAY THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS WAS HEADED, WAS TURNING OUT TO BE THE MOST JUDICIOUS, EFFECTIVE AND DIRECT WAY TO OBTAIN THE OPPOSITE RESULT.

4. MONTHS HAVE PASSED AND RECENTLY THE NEWS AGENCIES REPORT THAT U.S. GOVERNMENT'S LEADING OFFICIAL IN THE FIELD OF LATIN AMERICAN POLICY, TERENCE A. TODMAN, WHO RECENTLY MADE A TOUR OF
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ALMOST ALL THE CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES, ACQUAINTING HIMSELF WITH THE TRUTH ABOUT THEIR SOCIAL CONDITIONS, ADVOCATED IN A SPEECH GIVEN AT THE CENTER FOR INTER AMERICAN RELATIONS IN NEW YORK THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION ADOPT A "MORE MODERATE, BALANCED AND REALISTIC CAMPAIGN" ON THE SUBJECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

5. TODMAN WARNED THAT "WE MUST AVOID BELIEVING THAT ONLY THE OPPOSITION SPEAKS THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH ABOUT CONDITIONS IN THEIR COUNTRY." WE MUST AVOID -- HE ADJED-- POINTING TO SOME AND NOT TO OTHERS; SELECTIVE MORALITY IS A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS." AND HE CRITICIZED THE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE EFFECTS OF THE CURRENT PUNITIVE LEGISLATION WHICH CUTS OFF AID TO COUNTRIES WHICH PRESUMABLY VIOLATE HUMAN RIGHTS.

6. IN SYNTHESIS, (THERE ARE) THE TWO MISTAKES NOTED ABOVE AND THE DANGER OF OPPOSITE EFFECTS.

7. BUT THERE IS MORE. TODMAN, A CAREER DIPLOMAT WITH EXPERIENCE IN LATIN AMERICAN AND AFRICAN AFFAIRS, WHO BECAUSE HE SHARED THE IDEALS OF PRESIDENT CARTER WAS GIVEN THE RESPONSIBILITY OF

DIRECTING POLICY FOR LATIN AMERICA, PRESENTED STRONG ARGUMENTS. HE SAID THAT ONE MUST AVOID SPEAKING OUT BEFORE LEARNING ALL THE FACTS, OR WITHOUT CALCULATING THE LIKELY REACTION AND RESPONSES TO OUR INITIATIVES; THAT WE MUST AVOID EXPECTING OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO ACHIEVE OVERNIGHT FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN THEIR SOCIETIES AND PRACTICES IN RESPONSE TO OUR BIDDING WITHOUT REGARD TO HISTORICAL CIRCUMSTANCES; THAT WE MUST AVOID CONDEMNING AN ENTIRE GOVERNMENT FOR EVERY NEGATIVE ACT BY ONE OF ITS OFFICIALS; THAT WE MUST AVOID HOLDING ENTIRE COUNTRIES UP TO PUBLIC RIDICULE AND EMBARRASMENT, TRAMPLING ON THEIR NATIONAL DIGNITY AND PRIDE.

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8. THE AMERICAN CONTINENT HAS RECEIVED TODMAN'S SELF CRITICISM WITH ENORMOUS SATISFACTION BECAUSE IT IS THE FIRST CALL FOR THE ATTENTION OF PRESIDENT CARTER, WHICH COMES NOT ONLY FROM WITHIN THE UNITED STATES, BUT ALSO FROM ONE OF HIS MOST CAPABLE AND FAITHFUL COLLABORATORS.

9. TODMAN HAS SYNTHESIZED IN HIS SPEECH THE STRONGEST ARGUMENTS THAT IN THE FULFILLMENT OF HIS FUNCTION HE COULD GATHER FROM THE LATIN AMERICAN NATIONS. AND HE HAS HAD THE SINCERITY AND SUFFICIENT COURAGE TO TRANSMIT THEM PUBLICLY, AFTER BEING CONVINCED OF THEIR VALIDITY.

10. (THE SPEECH) DEALS, THEN, WITH THE MOST IMPORTANT REACTION REGISTERED UP UNTIL NOW AGAINST THE INCOHERENT POLICY OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT. AND IT GIVES OPTIMISTIC HOPE FOR AN ADJUSTMENT OF THE DIRECTION OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, OVERCOMING THE OPINION OF THOSE ADVISORS WHO, AS SENATOR ROBERT DOLE SAID SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, "ONE DOESN'T KNOW WHY" THEY ARE SO BENT ON NORMALIZING RELATIONS WITH OPENLY COMMUNIST REGIMES, WHILE THEY FREELY CONTINUE TO INFLICT MORAL INJURY TO SO MANY TRADITIONAL FRIENDS.

11. AFTER VISITING LATIN AMERICA; AFTER EXCHANGING IDEAS WITH ITS LEADERS; AFTER OBSERVING THE PROCESSES WHICH ARE TAKING PLACE IN THE DIFFERENT COUNTRIES, TODMAN HAS BEEN CONVERTED INTO A TRUE DEFENDER OF THE AGGRIEVED CONTINENT. COUNTRIES, LIKE URUGUAY, WHICH HAVE UNJUSTLY SUFFERED THE MORAL INJURY REPRESENTED BY THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE, CANNOT HELP BUT FEEL THEMSELVES COMFORTED BY THE SELF CRITICISM OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL. AND THEY CONFIDENTLY HOPE THAT HIS VOICE WILL BE HEARD, SO THAT VERY SOON AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY MAY REGAIN ITS PLACE AS THE LEADING WESTERN POWER WHICH IT HAD ALWAYS HAD AND NEVER SHOULD HAVE ABANDONED.

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